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## FEMALE SATIRISTS OF ANCIENT IRELAND

by

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Although verse satire has for many a century been regarded as a particularly masculine domain,<sup>1</sup> women satirists at one period in the history of the genre achieved the dubious importance of being regarded as a full-fledged professional group. When verse satire was in its magical or incantational stages in ancient Ireland,<sup>2</sup> female satirists appear to have been as numerous and as powerful as the druidesses (who may in some instances have been wives of druids and hence intimately cognizant of druidic lore). Indeed, Professor Eugene O'Curry suggests that early Irish verse satire of the magical sort was perhaps a branch of druidism and that "the satirical poet must have dealt largely in Druidism as known or practised in times not yet far removed from his own."<sup>3</sup> Be that as it may, the female satirist appears so frequently and with such dread results in the pages of the heroic tales of ancient Eriu that one may well consider that formidable lady and her satire as interesting and relatively unexplored phenomena in the history of verse satire.

### I

Like the druidesses, the female satirists are rarely spoken of at any length. In *The Book of Invasions* there is brief mention of the

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<sup>1</sup>In our day women have successfully experimented with delicately searing *vers de société*; but bitter, destructive verse satire in the grand manner has ever been left to the Juvenals, Popes, Swifts, and Voltaires of literature. In prose, however, there have been occasional satiric novelists of great distinction such as Jane Austen and now and again a feminine satirist in drama; but on the whole, satire, both prose and verse, remains a masculine province.

<sup>2</sup>See Fred N. Robinson, "Satirists and Enchanters in Early Irish Literature," *Studies in the History of Religions* (New York, 1912), pp. 95-130.

<sup>3</sup>*On the Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish*, ed. W. K. Sullivan (London, 1873, 3 vols.), 2.216. I have already noted the similarities in methods and intentions between the Irish male satirists and the smiths, leeches, and druids (see "Celtic Smiths and Satirists: Partners in Sorcery," *ELH*, VIII (1941), 184-97).

fact that six women of the nobles among the sons of Mil have died on the high seas between Spain and Ireland and that one of these is

Scene, the woman-satirist, wife of Amergin White-Knee (she died with them on the sea while they were coming to Ireland; so that Amergin said, "The harbor where we land, the name of Scene will be on it." That was true, for from her is named Imber Scene); . . .<sup>4</sup>

As the wife of Amergin, chief poet, judge, and druid of the sons of Mil, Scene was by marriage a woman of considerable importance in whose memory the first soil touched by the Milesians might very suitably be named. Just how much of Scene's prestige depended on her personal function as a woman satirist and to what extent her accomplishments in satire grew out of Amergin's widely recognized skill as a poet and druid one can only guess.

A female satirist is often encountered, apparently by artless chance, as she is travelling on her way westward. More likely than not, she is seeking for some one to aid her in carrying out a trick plot of personal revenge which shrewdly utilizes some known weakness of her victim. Here, in this incident from "The Intoxication of the Ulstermen," appear the motifs of the chance meeting, the westward journeying, the revenge scheme, and the female satirist Richis' clever use of the famous bias of CuChullain:

Crimthann Nia Nair of the Erna escaped from the battle. He met with Richis, a female satirist, westwards of the Laune. "Was my son lost?" asked she.

"Yes," said Crimthann.

"Come with me," said she, "until you avenge him."

"What revenge?" asked Crimthann.

"That you slay CuChullain for his sake," replied she.

"How can that be done?" asked Crimthann.

"Not difficult. If you only use your two hands upon

<sup>4</sup> Trans. by R. A. Stewart Macalister and John MacNeill, *Leabhar Gabhála* (1916), reprinted in *Ancient Irish Tales*, ed. Tom Peete Cross and Clark H. Slover (New York, 1936), pp. 20-1. In *The Book of Invasions* female druids seem very like female satirists in certain of their capacities: when the King of Greece assembled help for his kinsmen, the Children of Nemed, in Ireland, he "brought together an immense host of the choice of warriors, of druids and druidesses, of wolves and venomous animals" (*ibid.*, p. 6); and when the Children of Nemed meet the Fomorians, they send a druidess in the form of a concubine to the tower of the Fomorian chieftain, Conann (*ibid.*, p. 7). Later, "a battle was begun first between their druids, and another between their druidesses, so that it went against the Fomorians" (*loc. cit.*). Thus, the druidesses are fighters, battle-decoys, shape-shifters, messengers and ambassadors as are the female satirists in various tales.

him, you will need nothing more; for you will find him unprepared."

They then went in pursuit of the host of the Ulstermen and found CuChullain on a ford before them in the country of Owey. Richis took off her clothes in presence of CuChullain, who hid his face downwards, that he might not see her nakedness.

"Attack him now, O Crimthann," said Richis.

"The man approaches thee," said Loeg.

"Not so, indeed," said CuChullain. "Whilst the woman is in that condition I shall not rise up."

Loeg took a stone out of the chariot and cast it at her, which hit her across the *luthan*, so that her back was broken in two; and she died thereof afterwards.<sup>5</sup>

Richis here makes no use of her satiric quatrains either to avenge her son or to prevent her own death.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, she even finds it necessary to ask Crimthann's aid to carry out her plan; and since no satirist, male or female, may be refused a demand, Crimthann has no choice but to assent.

Richis' daughter, Gris, is also a female satirist and, like her mother, seeks personal revenge. Professor Robinson mentions<sup>7</sup> Gris appearing as a female rhymester in one of the prose *Dindsenchas* or early Irish topographical legends who casts satiric verses against Maistiú. Gris "demanded of her and so maltreated her with blemishing lampoons that she died thereof before her."<sup>8</sup> But Gris herself,

<sup>5</sup> Trans. by William M. Hennessy, *Royal Irish Academy*, Todd Lecture Series 1 (1889), reprinted in Cross and Slover, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

<sup>6</sup> John Gregorson Campbell writes (*Superstitions of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland* [Glasgow, 1900], pp. 278-9): "When a curse proceeds from rage or malevolence, it is at the same time a confession of impotence. The party uttering it is unable at the moment to indulge his rancour in any other way. If he had the power he would bring all the woes he threatens or imprecates there and then on his enemy's devoted head. Patience is no element of wrath and rarely enters the house of malevolence, and if the man who curses his enemy had the artillery of heaven at command, he would at that moment devote his enemy to unspeakable misery. This impotence of rage is the reason why curses are so frequently ascribed to angry old women."

<sup>7</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 121. See also Robinson's note 101 (p. 121) for further instances of the destructive powers of female satirists.

<sup>8</sup> Trans. by Whitley Stokes, *Revue Celtique* 15 (1894). 334-5. Death comes to Maistiú instantly, but such extremely powerful satire is an exception. Most incantational satire depends on the accumulating fears and psychological reactions of the victim and hence requires some time in which to accomplish its object—a whole year, even. In A. H. Leahy's translation of "The Combat at the Ford" from the *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (*Heroic Romances of Ireland* [London, 1905, 2 vols.], 1.117), nine days are specified as the length of time required before death comes to the victim: "And then did Maev send to Ferdia Druids, and satirists, and revilers, in order that against him should be made three crushing reproaches, and three satires; that the stains of shame, and of blemish, and of disgrace should be raised on his face; so that even if he died not at once, death should be his within the space of nine days if he went with them not."

like her mother before her, is slain almost immediately by a sling-stone hurled by an angry avenger. Professor Robinson also cites<sup>9</sup> one of the *Dindsenchas* of Dublin in which a rejected wife, Dub, i.e., the Black One (who was a druidess as well as a poetess and satirist), chants a sea-spell to drown her rival, Aide, and all of Aide's family. (Ancient Irish destructive verses usually operated in ever-widening circles to include the victim's family, his horses and hounds, his fields and rivers, and so on.) Dub, however, like Richis and Gris, is struck by a stone from a vengeful servant's sling-shot and herself drowns in a pool or *lind*, hence *Dub-lind*.<sup>10</sup>

The fact that the three women satirists just mentioned all met violent deaths does not necessarily mean, however, that their bodies were not sacrosanct, in theory at least, as were those of the male satirists. Various professional men satirists meet untimely deaths at the hands of the angry relatives and friends of their victims, but such deaths are violations of ancient Irish tribal custom which provided that satirists were to come to no physical harm.

Like the druidesses, nearly all female satirists seem to have had in some degree the gift of prophecy. In "The Exile of the Sons of Usnech," Leborcham the woman satirist, who is the messenger<sup>11</sup> of Conchobar as well as the guardian and confidante of the maiden Deirdre, is able to assure the cloistered Deirdre that her future lover is named Naise, son of Usnech, and that he is at that very moment at Emain Macha. Besides her foster-father and foster-mother, none of mankind is allowed to see the girl Deirdre, except "Leborcham, to whom naught could be refused, for she was a woman satirist."<sup>12</sup>

Nor must one overlook the Athenian woman Carman, who came to Eriu to ruin and blight the fertility of the land with "charms and spells and incantations" only to be confronted with the powerful counter satires and spells marshalled by the Tuatha's druids and poets

<sup>9</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 121.

<sup>10</sup> See the translation by Whitley Stokes, *Revue Celtique* 15 (1894). 326-7.

<sup>11</sup> Note this description of Finn mac Cumhaill's female messenger, Deirdriu of Dub Sliab ("Black Mountain"), in "The Pursuit of Diarmuid and Grainne," trans. by Standish Hayes O'Grady, *Ossianic Society Transactions* 3 (1857), reprinted in Cross and Slover, *op. cit.*, pp. 390-2: "... they saw the woman messenger of Finn mac Cumhaill coming with the speed of a swallow, or weasel, or like the blast of a sharp, pure-swift wind, over the top of every high hill ... the gleam of death and of instant destruction was executed upon every one of them except Deirdriu of Dub Sliab ... who went wheeling and hovering around whilst Diarmuid was making slaughter of the strangers."

<sup>12</sup> Trans. by A. H. Leahy, *Heroic Romances of Ireland*, 1(1905), reprinted in Cross and Slover, *op. cit.*, p. 242.



and satirists.<sup>13</sup> Over and over again, destruction of organic beauty and fertility for the purposes of revenge appears to be the object of these ancient incantational satirists.

In the *Táin Bó Regamna*, one of the *remscéla* or foretales to the *Táin Bó Cualnge*, the Celtic battle goddess, the Morrighu, declares herself to be a female satirist. Her coming is heralded by "a cry terrible and fearful to the ears":

They [CuChullain and Loeg] saw before them a chariot harnessed with a chestnut horse. The horse had but one leg, and the pole of the chariot passed through its body, so that the peg in front met the halter passing across its forehead. Within the chariot sat a woman, her eye-brows red, and a crimson mantle around her. Her mantle fell behind her between the wheels of the chariot so that it swept along the ground. A big man went along beside the chariot. He also wore a coat of crimson, and on his back he carried a forked staff of hazelwood, while he drove a cow before him.<sup>14</sup>

The scarlet trappings may be a part of the Morrighu's proper habiliments as a battle goddess, but the proximity of a piece of hazelwood is no mere chance. The woman refuses to tell CuChullain her real name, but her mocking companion tells him riddlingly that she is called, "*Faebor beg-beoil cuimdiuir folt scenb-gairit sceo uath.*" Finally, under threat, she says,

"I am a female satirist, and he is Daire mac Fiachna of Cooley; I carry off this cow as a reward for a poem."<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> "The Prose Tales in the Rennes Dindsenchas," trans. by Whitley Stokes, *Revue Celtique* 15 (1894). 311-5.

<sup>14</sup> Cross and Slover, *op. cit.*, pp. 211-2 (from the version by Eleanor Hull, *The Cuchullain Saga* [1892], from the trans. by Ernest Windisch, *Irische Texte* 2. Ser. 2 [1887]. Contrast this picture of the Morrighu as a female satirist with the following description of Dubthach Chafertongue, famed warrior-satirist of the Ulstermen: "I saw a prodigious royal band. One man in front of it, with coarse, black hair. An expression of gentleness in one of his eyes; foam of crimson blood in the other eye; that is, at one time a gentle, friendly aspect, at another time a fierce expression. An open-mouthed otter on each of his two shoulders. A smooth, white-surfaced shield upon him. A white-hilted sword with him. A large warrior-like spear to the height of his shoulder. When its spear-ardor seized it, he would deal a blow of the handle of the mighty spear upon his hand when the full measure of a sack of fiery particles would burst over its side and edge. A blood-black cauldron of horrid, noxious liquid before him, composed, through sorcery, of the blood of dogs, cats, and druids. And the head of the spear was plunged in that poisonous liquid when its spear-ardor came" ("The Intoxication of the Ulstermen," trans. by William M. Hennessy, *Royal Irish Academy, Todd Lecture Series* 1 [1889], reprinted by Cross and Slover, *op. cit.*, pp. 230-1).

<sup>15</sup> Cross and Slover, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

The song which the Morrigu then sings to CuChullain has not been translated; but since she has arranged the "chance" meeting with him to apprise him of his approaching death, it is in all probability of a satiric nature. When CuChullain attempts to spring into her chariot, he finds that horse, woman, chariot, man, and cow are all disappeared and that a blackbird sits on a branch:

"A dangerous enchanted woman you are," said CuChullain.

"Whatever thou hast done," said she, "will bring thee ill-luck."

"Thou canst not harm me," said he.

"Certainly I can," said the woman. "I am guarding thy death-bed, and I shall be guarding it henceforth."<sup>16</sup>

Then, before departing into the fairy-mound of Cruachan in Connacht, the Morrigu threatens that on the battle-day she will become in succession an eel, a gray wolf, and a white, red-eared cow to do CuChullain harm.

Here it is obviously impossible to attempt to separate the offices of satirist, druidess, battle-goddess, and woman of the *sidh*; but we may regard the proximity of the hazel branch, the baffling name, the untranslatable poem, the reward for the poem, and the revenge and personal destruction motif as being of a piece with the slight knowledge we have of early Irish incantational satire.

But there are other occasions on which the Morrigu indicates her kinship with the female satirists. In "The Second Battle of Mag Tured," the Morrigu (whose hair falls in nine loosened tresses) not only cohabits with the Dagda before the battle but arranges a wily scheme with him whereby she and Eriu's "men of art" will destroy Inlech, son of the Fomorian king, by taking away "the blood of his heart and the kidneys of his valor." When the Morrigu finally goes to the high hills to proclaim the end of the mighty battle, "then she was prophesying the end of the world, and foretelling every evil that would be therein, and every disease and every vengeance." Her prophetic hill-top verses, it is worth noting, most frequently dwell on the lack of fertility:

Summer without flowers,  
Kine . . . without milk,

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 213.

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Woods without mast,  
Sea without produce. . . .

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An evil time!<sup>17</sup>

It is also significant that the Morrighu in her function as a female satirist foments the Cattle-Raid of Cooley, since stirring up desired quarrels between powerful chieftains and tribes was a major occupation among the male satirists. The death-day of CuChullain is, in fact, a constant encounter with male and female satirists; for, as has been variously observed, satirists figure in the *Táin* almost as much as do the Fates in the Greek epics and in much the same way. On the Ulster hero's last day, it is Leborcham, the woman satirist (the only "good" satirist in these old tales, by the way—a sort of feminine Cathbad), who bids the weary warrior rise to begin the fighting and Leborcham again who suddenly meets him and, in certain knowledge of his coming death, petitions him not to leave behind the queens of Emain Macha.<sup>18</sup>

There are many women who suddenly appear in these ancient stories, pronounce their boding words, and as suddenly depart. Although they do not formally admit to being satirists, they obviously perform the same functions and behave in the same way as the acknowledged satirists. An example in point is this instance from "The Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel":

. . . they saw a lone woman coming to the Hostel, after sunset, and seeking to be let in. As long as a weaver's beam was each of her two shins, and they were as dark as the back of a stag-beetle. A greyish, woolly mantle she wore. Her lower hair reached as far as her knee. Her lips were on one side of her head. She came and put one of her shoulders against the doorpost of the house, casting the evil eye on the king and the youths who surrounded him in the Hostel. He himself addressed her from within.

"Well, O woman," said Conaire, "if thou art a soothsayer, what fortune seest thou for us?"

<sup>17</sup> Trans. by Whitley Stokes, *Revue Celtique* 12 (1891), reprinted in Cross and Slover, *op. cit.*, pp. 38; 47-8.

<sup>18</sup> CuChullain's teacher in feats of arms, one recalls, was the female warrior, Scathach, a sorceress on the isle of Skye, who, together with her daughter, Uathach, and Aife, "the hardest woman-warrior in the world," taught "in a great yew-tree." Scathach was also a *faíth* or prophetess (cf. Carolus Plummer, *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae* [Oxford, 1910, 2 vols.], 1. clxiv. 7) and an extemporizer of verse (see "The Wooing of Emer," from the version by Kuno Meyer in Eleanor Hull, *The Cuchullain Saga* [1892], reprinted in Cross and Slover, *op. cit.*, p. 168).

"Truly I see for thee," she answered, "that neither fell nor flesh of thine shall escape from the place into which thou hast come, save what birds will carry away in their claws."<sup>19</sup>

Although on request the woman confesses to the name Cailb, she admits that she has many other names besides:

"Easy to say," quoth she. "Samon, Sinand, etc." On one foot, and holding up one hand, and breathing one breath she sang all that to them from the door of the house.<sup>20</sup>

When she demands that Conaire break a taboo for her, she employs a favorite ruse of satirists, who know full well that if taboos may not be broken, neither may satirists be refused. CuChullain met his death, it will be remembered, because diabolically wily male satirists maneuvered him into positions where he was forced to break one taboo after another.

There is also the professional female mourner, the *bean chaointe*, a woman possessing a plaintive, reed-like voice and a gift for swiftly extemporizing dirges either praising the dead person's virtues or vigorously satirizing his enemies. In fact, the two sides of a family sometimes hired two female mourners for the express purpose of participating in an impromptu scolding-match on the night of the wake, vying with each other in speedily extemporizing in short, clipped lines solemn verse invective and witty recriminatory repartee.<sup>21</sup>

## 2

Some important additional bits of information regarding the female satirists may be gleaned from the ancient Irish laws (the *Heptads*, the *Brehon Laws*, and various legal tracts) which were as a rule precise and severe in their specifications concerning these women of satire.

*Heptad* XV uncompromisingly classifies female satirists with thieves, liars, and common trollops of the bushes:

<sup>19</sup> Trans. by Whitley Stokes, *Revue Celtique* 22(1901), and 23(1902), and reprinted in Cross and Slover, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-8.

<sup>20</sup> *Loc. cit.* Professor Robinson also indentifies as women satirists the two Connacht women who come to weep crocodile tears over CuChullain, prophesying the ruin of Ulster (*op. cit.*, p. 120, cited from Ernst Windisch's edition of the *Táin Bó Cualnge* [Irische Texte, Extraband, 1887], p. 829).

<sup>21</sup> *The Poems of Egan O'Rahilly*, ed. Rev. Patrick S. Dinneen and Tadhg O'Donoghue (Irish Texts Society, 3 [London, 1911, 2nd ed.]). li-liii.

There are with the Feine seven women who are not entitled to "dire" nor honour-price: a woman who steals; a woman who carves every shape; a woman who betrays; . . .

while the native glossator notes that "a woman who carves every shape" is one who satirizes every shape of person.<sup>22</sup>

The *Brehon Laws* query:

Which are the three sons who do not receive the dignity of chieftain with the Feine? The son of a bond-maid; the son of a "mucsaid"; the son of a "birid," . . .

and the commentator explains why the son of a female satirist may never aspire to a chieftainship:

The son of a "birid," i.e. of a female satirist. What is the reason that there is no land for them? : the following is the reason: . . . It is not easy to place a wordy "berach" i.e. I do not deem it easy to instal the son of a scold, a satirist, in the chieftainship.<sup>23</sup>

Relative to the pledge-interests of the woman satirist, the *Brehon Laws* include this markedly ambiguous provision couched in enigmatic language and defying practical application:

The lawful pledge-interests of each woman who satirizes: if it be lost, it is lawful for her to satirize the head of the tribe of the person whom he shelters as to the pledge, until he decides for his honour in "gabla seds." So also is the lawful pledge-interest of each man who satirizes; it has been fixed at equal "dire," from the "tigern-bard" to the "dris"-poet, so that there is the same interest for their pledge.

No clearer is the glossator's note, here quoted verbatim:

Each woman, i.e., the female bard. It is lawful, i.e. it is lawful in this instance to satirize the head of the tribe of every one for whom he gave a pledge, unless he levies it from his subject; or it is shelter she has in this place, and the kinsman absconded, and it is for the

<sup>22</sup> *The Ancient Laws of Ireland*, ed. Eugene O'Curry (Dublin, 1865-1901, 5 vols.), 5.177. See also *Heptad XXII* (*op. cit.*, 5.203-5).

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.457. "Birid" and "berach" seem to be synonymous terms meaning shrew, scold, or female satirist.

double half-seizure of the fugitive that the head of the tribe has been satirized. Until he decides, i.e. until the head of the tribe gives in defence of his honour the thing which is awarded according to the decision. In branching-"seds," i.e. half-ounces are *the* three graduated "seds." So also, i.e. the free bards. It has been fixed, i.e. they have been fixed at equality of "dire" with the female bards, i.e. three half-ounces. From the "tigern-bard," i.e. from the person who has the lordship of bardship to the person who is most powerful at lacerating with satire, and the free-bards are all "hounds for acuteness"; each of these has three "dairt"-heifers as his pledge-interest.<sup>24</sup>

Evidently the female satirist could expect legal justice in the particular instance just cited; but for the most part these archaic accretions of custom and law testify clearly that the professional woman of satire was a fearsome person<sup>25</sup> to be kept legally outside the bounds of respectable family and tribal life.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.389. An interesting corollary item in the *Heptads (LII)* is this ruling concerning a woman who has had a satire made upon her: "There are with the Feine seven women, who though bound by son and security, are competent to separate from co-habitation, whatever day they like; and whatever has been given them as their dowry is theirs by right: a woman upon whom her husband gives circulation to a satire until she is laughed at; . . ." and the accompanying commentary explains: "Circulation to a satire, i.e. to repeat satire, whatever be the kind of satire. ['Glasgabail,' that is, a satire which resulted in repulsive blemishes or blotches on the face, was evidently the kind of satire especially reserved for women.] There is a 'dairt'-heifer for *telling it to one pillow* in this case, and a fourth part of the dowry *if told* in the presence of *the dwellers* of one house or of one village; and full dowry if outside the house, and full 'eric' besides, i.e. this answers to an assembly; i.e. a woman upon whom he puts the circulation of an unlawful satire, has her choice, whether she will separate and take her dowry with her, or whether she will remain in the law of marriage; and whichever of them she adopts, dowry and honour-price are to be paid to her, and 'eric' according to the nature of the kind of satire, i.e. because it is not lawful to make a satire at all upon her.

So that she is laughed at, i.e. so that all people are making game of her" (*ibid.*, 5.295).

<sup>25</sup> St. Patrick himself in the poem ascribed to him, the *Faed Fiada*, calls upon the whole gamut of divine might and wisdom to protect him against "the spells of women and of smiths and of Druids"; and St. Columba is said to have included women in a similar magical grouping in a poem ascribed to him. See *The Religious Songs of Connacht: A Collection of Poems, Stories, Prayers, Satires, Ranns, Charms, etc.*, ed. Douglas Hyde [London, 1906, 2 vols.] 2.265; and *Miscellany of the Irish Arch. Soc.* 1[1846] .6.

<sup>26</sup> The ancient laws concerning male satirists are equally specific and almost equally stern. See *The Ancient Laws of Ireland*, 1.45-6; 59; 86; 175-7; 185-9; 191-3; 231; 237; 3.25; 93; 140 n.; 352 n.; 4. 345; 347-9; and 5. 169; 173-5; 229; 231; 233-5; 301; 359; 361; 369; 473.



## 3

The ancient Irish female satirist thus appears to have been some three or four functionaries in one: seeress or prophetess; druidess; poetess; and battle-aide with multiple duties as strategist, diplomat, and messenger. But whatever her official function, personal vengeance nearly always appears to be her prime motive. To accomplish her ends, she induces her victims to break their most important specific taboos; she stirs up deadly feuds between powerful opponents; she persuades accomplices to help her set traps and to take advantage of a victim's known prejudices; and she is able to foretell the whereabouts and the precise state of preparedness of her prey. She resorts to riddles and numerous nonsense eke-names to confuse the inquisitive ones she meets; she may have druidical powers of metamorphosing herself into other forms—blackbirds, wolves, eels, cows, and so on; and sometimes she apparently depends on the proximity of certain magical woods and trees—the hazel, the white-thorn, the black-thorn, the yew (the druid's tree), and the rowan or quicken tree, while she is like the male satirists in loving the windy hill-tops and the high places which give her a literal ascendancy over her quarry.

Apparently the feminine satirists worked singly; at least I know of no instance where they participate in anything resembling the highly ceremonial *glám-dichenn* or coterie satire described in the *Book of Ballymote*. Neither do they appear to have been ranked in grades or classifications as were the male satirists. Rat-rhyming, that curious branch of lethal poetical satire, does not appear in their repertoires. Neither do they seem to have made use of the holed stone, the single thorn, or any kind of cursing-tablet in the manner of the male satirists. But, if their appurtenances and trappings seem less elaborate, so are their demands and rewards less outrageous than those of the men. One gets the impression that the women satirists are practically free individual agents wreaking personal vengeance rather than members or retainers of any chieftain's household.

Like the male satirists, these women apparently recited short, rhyming lines intended to destroy their victims. Here is the same emphasis on physical mutilation, disintegration, and death that Professor Robinson long ago pointed out in connection with masculine satirists. The woman of satire will drown her victims; she will blemish and mar their faces; she will have their hearts' blood; she will bruise their kidneys and crush their bowels and leave their flesh on white stones for carrion-crows to pick. She has an affinity with

pain and disease and disaster of all kinds. Here and there emerge details which mark her as a woman of her profession: a deformed mouth or ugly eye; an association in one way or another with the color black and with the north or black wind; a dependence on folk fears; an unceremonious seizure of cattle or food as payment for poems; and an inclination to travel ever to the westward.

## 4

The female satirist has never reappeared in the main stream of English verse satire, but various minor phenomena seem clearly reminiscent of these women of ancient Eriu, if not akin to them. In Ireland, Wales, and Scotland, particularly in the Outer Isles, there are still women today,<sup>27</sup> elderly ones<sup>28</sup> for the most part, who, like Scott's Madge Wildfire in *The Heart of Midlothian*, pronounce rhythmical, even lyrical, incantations against their enemies. This instance from George Moore's story, "Julia Cahill's Curse," is a distinct remnant of the old "Hilltop Satire":

... She put her curse on the village twenty years ago, and every year a roof has fallen in and a family has gone away. ... Yes, sir, a man who was taking some sheep to the fair saw her: there was a fair that day. He saw her standing at the top of the road. The sun was just above the hill, and looking back she cursed the village, raising both hands, sir, up to the sun, and since that curse was spoken, ever year a roof has fallen in.<sup>29</sup>

But in English literature women are far less frequently linked with satire, save as the perennial objects of it. In the mediaeval morality plays, the ubiquitous character, Detraction, is usually feminine, a provision in keeping with the popular notion that corrective reproof and positive injunction usually come from the feminine tongue. There is also George Gascoigne's famous allegorical

<sup>27</sup> See *The Religious Songs of Connacht*, ed. Douglas Hyde, 2.265.

<sup>28</sup> Incantations are usually recited by old women past the age of bearing children. Sir James G. Frazer observes in his *Folk-Lore in the Old Testament* (New York, 1927), p. 157, that in certain regions curses and blessings are recited alternately by old men past the age of begetting children. See also Frazer's chapter, "The Witch of Endor," *op. cit.*, pp. 291 ff.

<sup>29</sup> *The Untilled Field* (Philadelphia, 1903), pp. 196; 201. See also "A Playhouse in the Waste," (*op. cit.*, p. 217): "... he knew all about my walk with the priest, and was soon telling me that it was the curse of the Widow Sheridan that had brought down the wind that had wrecked the playhouse." Plummer says (*op. cit.*, l. clxxiii) that comic curses are to be found to this day in children's games in Ireland.

genealogy of a feminine Satyra in his blank-verse satire, *The Steele Glass*, 1576 (11.54-160), wherein Satyra is the "maimed and mutilated" sister of Poetry.<sup>30</sup> Shakespeare's Queen Margaret in the Henry plays and in *Richard III* is famed for her curses and imprecations detailing the destruction of the human body and is peculiarly reminiscent of the women of Eriu in much the same way that Suffolk and Thersites remind one of the Dubthach Chafertongues and Aithirnes. There are, too, certain sharply vengeful lines of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu who had the temerity to cross an unequal lance with Pope now and then.

Even though with industry one might glean a double handful of such examples from English literature, it is apparent that these professional female satirists of ancient Ireland, so clearly kinswomen on the one hand of Circe and the Marsi, of Medea and Canidia, of the Witch of Endor and the Cumaean Sibyls, of the Lapland witches and the Celtic druidesses, and indeed of all women of magic of whatever kind from Cracow to Salamanca and from Thessaly to Delhi, and as clearly akin on the other hand to the world's great literary satirists, constitute an unique phenomenon in the generic history of verse satire.

*The University of North Carolina*

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<sup>30</sup> The assignation of the feminine gender to Satire is itself not unusual in the Elizabethan period, for poets frequently tried to include Satire or Satyra as a lesser but worthy lady-in-waiting to the Muse of Poetry (cf. Thomas Randolph's *The Muses' Looking-Glass* [1638], I. iv).

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## THE EUROPEAN ORIGIN OF AN ILLINOIS TALE

by  
Grace Partridge Smith

Some time ago I heard a story rather less common than the many that pass from mouth to mouth in the Middle West. It was related to me by a former resident<sup>1</sup> of Chandlerville, Illinois, who had heard it more than forty years ago from a ne'er-do-well about town. Neither my informant nor the original narrator, it is safe to assert, was aware of the implications of the story or of its folklore lineage and probable origin. Further research discovered no list of variants, monograph, or study on the theme; it may, therefore, be of interest to examine the story more closely with a view to elucidating its history. Let us first set down the text of the Illinois tale:

Father sent my little brother out after the cows. He didn't come back and he didn't come back. Finally, Father said, "Gimme a sheet, I'm going to scare the daylights out of that kid!" So Father got a sheet and threw it around his shoulders. Then he rushed out of the yard toward the pasture where the cows were supposed to be rounded up. He was followed closely by a pet monkey which had grabbed a towel and wrapped it around himself in imitation of his master. When Father reached the hillside, he covered up his head with the sheet, and, waving his arms, wandered up and down the path looking for his boy. The monkey did the same. Finally, they heard the boy's voice crying out, "Run, Big 'Fraid, run; Little 'Fraid'll get you!"

Practically the same story has been reported from Canada (Ontario).<sup>2</sup> In various forms it also enjoys a certain vogue in several southern states as is shown by variants from Arkansas and Alabama<sup>3</sup>; Florida and North Carolina<sup>4</sup>; and Southern Missouri.<sup>5</sup> This handful seems, at least for the present, to exhaust the American

<sup>1</sup> Source: Mrs. Emma Rexroat, now living in Iowa City, Iowa.

<sup>2</sup> C. M. Barbeau, *JAFI*, XXXI (1918), 31.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Newbell Niles Puckett, *Folk Beliefs of the Southern Negro*, Chapel Hill (N. C.), 1926, p. 121. The story from Arkansas is repeated here and referred to a work by A. E. Gonzales. The citation appears to be erroneous.

<sup>4</sup> Elsie Clews Parsons, "Folk-Tales Collected at Miami, Florida," *JAFI*, XXX (1917), 227; "Tales from Guilford County, North Carolina," *ibid.*, p. 172.

<sup>5</sup> Joseph Médard Carrière, *Folk-Tales from the French Folk-Lore of Missouri*, Northwestern Studies in the Humanities, No. 1, Evanston and Chicago, 1937, pp. 96-100 (No. 19, "Guillaume sans Peur").

variants, though it is quite likely that others do exist, waiting only to be discovered and reported.

Before proceeding further, a few observations on the Missouri folk-tale from Professor Carrière's collection from Old Mines (cited in Note 5) may be useful. That story is obviously one of the many variants of the youth who wanted to learn fear (Cf. Grimm, No. 4, "Von Einem der auszog das Fürchten zu lernen"), to which type (Aarne-Thompson, No. 326) it has been rightly assigned by Carrière (*op. cit.*, p. 321). The Missouri variant is, however, of a compound character; there exists a decided cleavage between its first twenty-four lines and the rest of the tale. In its first episode, it parallels our Illinois story, lending itself admirably, it must be admitted, as an introduction to William's adventures. None the less, it is unrelated to the tale-type proper as represented by Grimm.

No comment is required on the origin of the story of the youth who wishes to learn fear. What should be brought out here is the somewhat less obvious fact that the prefatory incident of William, his father, and the monkey in the Missouri tale is also derived from European sources, for there exist a number of Old World variants of this type not noticed heretofore; it will, therefore, not be amiss to present them here in English translation.

The oldest known text is a Welsh tale:

The story of the challenge to go at midnight into a church or churchyard and to bring back a skull is widespread, including that in which the challenger, in playing the ghost, is himself terrified and runs away. This frequently happens in other circumstances to persons who impersonate ghosts. Hu Llwyd of Cynfal, Merioneth, a poet and reputed magician of the 17th century, father or grandfather of Morgan Llwyd, a celebrated mystic of the Civil War period, used to go at night to a rock in the river Cynfal, still known as Pulpud Huw Llwyd. His wife once sent her brother in a white sheet to frighten him. Seeing the pretended ghost, Huw asked some questions but got no answer. He then said: "If thou art a good spirit, thou wilt do me no harm for the sake of Morgan; if thou art an evil one, thou wilt do me no harm, as I am wedded to a sister of thine. Now, thou white one, beware of the black one behind thee!" Whereat the white one fled terrified.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> T. Gwynn Jones, *Welsh Folk-Lore and Custom*, London, 1930, p. 39. This excerpt used with special permission of the Author and Publishers, Methuen and Company, Ltd., London.



This narrative evidently goes back to the 17th century; its preservation must be attributed to the local and ethnographic peculiarities of rural Wales, quite different in this respect from those prevailing in England. Our theme, found on the Continent as well, will be recognized in the following anecdotes:

A shepherd in Hagstedt, Parish of Visbek, wishing to frighten some girls about midnight on their way back from Halter where they were breaking flax, disguised himself as best he could by taking a large white tablecloth and wrapping it around himself. Then he hid behind an embankment on the road. On hearing the girls singing, he got up and was going to come up to them by a detour. But, as he stood up, there rose up on the other side of the embankment a figure more terrifying than he. Quickly he began to run, but the figure followed him. The faster he ran, the closer came the strange footsteps; they followed him right up to the house door and then disappeared. The shepherd had such a fright that when he got inside the house he fainted away and died that same night.<sup>7</sup>

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A peasant in Calveslage, Parish Langförden, had had his horses taken on summer and winter evenings to a meadow at Vardel. The head servant was curious to find out whether the stable-boy (*Junge*) was afraid or not. So he concealed himself in a thicket, having thrown a white cloth over his shoulders. When the boy came along with the horses, he was just going to run up to frighten him when he happened to look to one side. What should he see but a tall black figure following him. He was terrified and ran as fast as his legs could carry him. The little stable-boy, however, a fearless chap, cried out, "Oh look, a Black Man is running after a White Man!" As soon as the head servant got home, he went to bed and lay sick a long while. That particular spot is to this day called "Spook Meadow" (*Spukwiese*).<sup>8</sup>

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A woman in Kortryk was very courageous and high spirited, but not forward like so many people. Her husband, on the other hand, was a wild fellow who jeered at everything. One Saturday, the woman was

<sup>7</sup> L. Strackerjan, *Aberglaube und Sagen aus dem Herzogthum Oldenburg*, 1909, I, 280. k.

<sup>8</sup> *id.*, *ibid.*, 315. q.

late getting home and her husband thought he would like to play a little joke on her and frighten her. So he put on a long white cloth that reached to the ground and then waited for her by the churchyard which she had to pass on her way home. After ten o'clock, she finally came along with a neighbor woman. Then the man stood up in his white dress and stood very still. "Just look there," said the neighbor, "there is a ghost!" "Let him be," replied the wife, "and we will say a *Pater* for him." After they had gone a few steps, the neighbor cried out again, "For God's sake, there is another, and now I see *two* of them!" The wife did not reply but kept on praying. Now the husband had heard these last words, and a shudder ran through his bone and marrow. However, he wanted to finish the joke before he took to flight. In turning his head, he saw a skeleton in grave-clothes nearby. At this, his courage left him and he ran as fast as he could after the women who were also frightened into running. The two women reached the house and locked the door behind them. "Wife, open the door!" called the husband, "It is I." But she did not open the door. He fainted from fright and terror and did not revive until the next day.<sup>9</sup>

On the three Thursdays preceding Holy Night, it is the custom in the Tyrol for children and young people to go from house to house and repeat a verse at each, for which they receive apples, rolls, and the like. . . . Children went in the daytime; grownups at night. The latter frequently went too far with their fun, for they often had a violin with them, and wherever people received them, they would dance and drink. . . . In the year 1804, eight hearty youths went down the valley one evening and "rapped" at each house, playing the violin and the clarinet. They were all masked, and one of their number had a silly long thick tail. . . . On they went, and the "Devil" hopped merrily along with them. Suddenly they saw another Devil, just the same as the other, so far as they could see. But they discovered that this was the *real* Devil, for he had goat feet. Little by little, they all went quietly home, but the *real* Devil then threw the *masked* Devil to the ground, scratched him pitifully, and left him lying flat as a warning to others. The poor fellow was restored with much pains. Since then, these practical jokes almost disappeared, and also, on other occasions, disguising oneself as a devil is avoided.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> J. W. Wolf, *Deutsche Märchen und Sagen*, 1845, p. 241, No. 136.

<sup>10</sup> J. N. Ritter v. Alpenburg, *Mythen und Sagen Tirols*, 1857, pp. 281 ff.

A cunning youth, learning that a large sum of money had been given into his father's keeping, disguised himself, went to the owner's house and demanded the money, saying he was the Devil and that the gold belonged to him. He did this several nights but got no results. In the meantime, the *real* Devil, in the guise of an old man, took up a night's lodging in the house. When the pretended Devil arrived and demanded the money three times in succession, the *real* Devil evidently flew off with him.<sup>11</sup>

The existence of the six European variants cited will leave no doubt about the Old World origin of the Illinois tale. Let us proceed to a brief analysis of the known variants. We recognize at once three different sub-types, (1) the hero disguises himself as the Devil and the real Devil appears, (2) he is merely frightened by a practical joker, (3) the practical joker is a monkey. The inference is permitted, it would seem, that the story has undergone a process of progressive decay. The original is, of course, (1), since it is based on the widespread belief that by imitating or depicting evil spirits, one draws those spirits near. Hence, the German proverb, "Wenn man den Teufel an die Wand malt, so kommt er!" Hence also, the prohibition not to imitate cries of ghosts or cries reputed coming from them, for, it is said, ghosts actually appear to foolhardy humans who disregard such prohibitions.<sup>12</sup> This belief is only a logical consequence of the widespread belief in imitative magic.

Stage (2) represents the leveling of the ancient theme still further to a harmless prank common enough in local legends. Stage (3) is clearly exotic, that is, non-European, but it clearly presupposes Stage (2). The conclusion is that it must have reached America in the form of a local legend.

In the preceding pages, the aim has been to show that the Illinois story, quoted at the beginning of this article, belongs to a distinct type of folktale, one that has hitherto received little, if any, attention. Furthermore, after mentioning American variants, it is suggested through presentation and discussion of Continental versions, that the

<sup>11</sup> Cf. C. Jungbauer, *Deutsche Sagen aus der tschechoslovakischen Republik*, 1934, II, 54. The paragraph is merely a brief outline of this variant.

<sup>12</sup> Imitating cry of demon attracts demon: A. Niederhöffer, *Mecklenburgs Volkssagen*, Leipzig, 1858-62, II, 79; Karl Bartsch, *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Mecklenburg*, Wien, 1879-80, I, 374; Adelbert Kuhn, *Sagen, Gebräuche und Märchen aus Westfalen*, Leipzig, 1859, I, 147, 181, 277; Rudolf Kapf, *Schwäbische Sagen*, Jena, 1926, p. 21; Paul Sébillot, *Le Folk-Lore de France*, Paris, 1904-1907, II, 138; Anatole Le Braz, *La légende de la Mort chez les Bretons armoricains*, Paris, 1912, I, 357 ff.

theme derives from Old World sources. In the analysis of this theme, the gradual decay of the tale from its earliest attested version is pointed out. And, finally, it is concluded that the type reached the New World in the form of a local legend.

*Carbondale, Illinois.*

## DAVY CROCKETT AND THE HEROIC AGE

by

Richard M. Dorson

No strain in American literature is considered more native than the exaggerative folklore of the frontier, yet its richest expression reveals at work a universal literary process. For the almanac legends of Davy Crockett, heretofore regarded simply as a high spot of South-western humor, possess the leading motives and conform to the growth structure of all Old World heroic story.

Certain salient features are common to heroic narrative: the preeminence of a mighty hero whose fame in myth has a tenuous basis in fact; single combats in which he distinguishes himself against dread antagonists both man and beast; vows and boastings; pride of the hero in his weapons, his horse, his dog, his woman; the remarkable birth and precocious strength of the hero; a tragic death in which the invincible but mortal champion is treacherously or unnaturally slain.<sup>1</sup> Thus the great heroes of Old World epic, saga, romance, tale- and ballad-cycles are celebrated for strength and prowess that excel all men of their age. Prince Marko squeezed drops of water out of cornel wood with his clenched hand, Cu Chulainn stood a house on end, Antar<sup>2</sup> caused the heads of warriors to fly through the air like balls and scattered their limbs like leaves. We recall how Hector fled before Achilles, how Hagen unashamedly admitted no man dared face Siegfried, how Grettir would take on four men at a time.

Prized weapons of the heroes have personal names: Beowulf's Hrunting, Siegfried's Balmung, Antar's Dhami, Roland's Durindana, are all famous swords; Arjun in the Mahabharata refers to his bow Ghandiva as dearer than life. Sometimes a faithful and marvelous horse accompanies the hero on his adventures: Marko shares his wine with the winged Sharatz; the fury of the Grey of Macha in protecting the corpse of Cu Chulainn became proverbial; Antar's fleet Abjer is faster than the wind.

<sup>1</sup> The discussion of heroic literature relies primarily on H. M. and N. K. Chadwick, *The Growth of Literature*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1932-40); see also H. M. Chadwick, *The Heroic Age* (Cambridge, 1912), W. P. Ker, *Epic and Romance* (London, 1922), ch. I, and N. K. Sidhanta, *The Heroic Age of India* (London, 1929).

<sup>2</sup> For Antar, least known of the great Heroic Age figures, see W. A. Clouston, ed., *Arabian Poetry for English Readers* (Glasgow, 1881); Terrick Hamilton, tr., *Antar, a Bedouen Romance*, 4 vols. (London, 1820).

A fundamental requirement of heroic legend is some means of terminating the career of the unconquerable hero in a way that crowns rather than mars his record. Accordingly death, characterized always by a strong sense of fatalism, comes through supernatural decree or artifice, through treachery or overwhelming odds; omens, visions, warnings, and portents inform the champion that his time is up. Fate operates both subtly and simply. Marko is merely told by a *vila* that his days are ended; he kills Sharatz, shatters his sword, and lies down to die. Treacherous Paris aided by Apollo shoots Achilles in his vulnerable heel with an arrow, and Hagen plunges a sword into the one place on Siegfried's back unsuspectingly marked by Kriemhild as mortal. Antar is shot from ambush by an archer he had once blinded, and realizes his "hours are numbered"; he ignores his death agonies to employ a courageous stratagem for saving his beloved Ablā from the pursuing Arabs. Clad in his heavy armor, Antar sits all night astride Abjer, guarding a narrow pass while Ablā's caravan flees on the other side; so awesome is the formidable figure that none dare approach, though all sense the end, until in the morning a dog nips Abjer's heels and the mailed corpse falls to the ground. So too does Cu Chulainn, who has defied evil portents to take the battlefield, receive death in warlike posture; girdling himself to a pillar after a disemboweling wound, he holds his sword aloft and faces the enemy, who hang back in doubt until a raven perches on his shoulder. The Cid likewise, when he has learned in visions that his death is at hand, orders his body to be dressed in armor and placed on his horse, where its lifelikeness intimidates the foe. In the stirring death scene of Grettir the outlaw, witchcraft, treachery and superior force all play their part. In his island hut Grettir lies bedridden, his thigh inflamed and putrid up to the rectum from an axe-blow directed by a hag's sorcery; his faithless thrall leaves suspended the ladder leading up to the cliff, and a party of twelve ascend to attack the outlaw and his brother; Grettir somehow gets to his feet and cuts one man in two, but the pieces fall on top of him and enable Thorbjorn Angle to wound him severely from the rear; when the fighting again turns to him, he has fallen on his face, dead of disease and wounds. In such ways of meeting death, the heroes evince most clearly their heroic qualities.

From precocious infancy to tragic doom, the heroic life cycle is apt to follow an established pattern embroidered with fierce hand-to-hand encounters and conquests, ardent wooings, travels in far lands, and superhuman exploits. Because these deeds often verge on and



include the fabulous and supernatural, the heroic biography is clearly not an historical record, but again it is never simple invention; in no case has the possibility of an historical prototype been finally disproved, while in some instances (Marko, Grettir, Antar, the Cid), his existence is unquestioned. The decision reached on Nicholas Toldi, the Hungarian hero regarded today as the "impersonation of gigantic physical strength coupled with chivalry, filial affection and reckless impetuosity," may stand as typical, namely that such a man probably existed "on whom the elements of heroic saga became superimposed."<sup>3</sup> Without this inflation of tradition, however, the revered hero would be "but the shadow of a shade."<sup>4</sup> The heroic story is not to be confused with chronicle, though it is firmly set in historic situation and an occasional episode in the cycle is verifiable;<sup>5</sup> by and large in the literary product the tissue of fiction has enveloped and digested the lumps of fact.

The character of the legendary Crockett is similar in its evolution to the other heroes. Based on a striking personality, colored from the common fund of frontier saga and enlarged through the expansive invention of many story-tellers, the fiction of an all-conquering backwoodsman grew, who could grapple with a bear in a stream, stay under water in a cave 11¾ hours and rout the Mexican army single-handed.<sup>6</sup> In the final creation certain historic bases remain; the setting of the frontier, the incongruity of a rustic Congressman, and the inspiring death at the Alamo were all elements that provoked and harmonized with legend. But in sum only the most attenuated relation exists between the historical and legendary figure.

Crockett's adventures very largely concern his scraps with characters and creatures that rove the backwoods or beset him on his travels. He tangles with Salt River roarers, Indians, Yankee pedlars, Irishmen, squatters, Pukes, Mexicans, pirates, cannibals; he tussles with panthers, bears, wolves, bulls, buffaloes, alligators, anacondas, rattlesnakes. In these numerous affrays the heroic point of view is constantly maintained—the highly personalized account of the com-

<sup>3</sup> Elemér Kerékgyártó, "Toldi in Life and Legend," *The Hungarian Quarterly*, VII (Autumn, 1941), 355.

<sup>4</sup> D. H. Low, tr., *The Ballads of Marko Kraljević* (Cambridge, 1922), xxii.

<sup>5</sup> Thus in the Marko poems only the Mina episode (Chadwick, *op. cit.*, III, 761-762), in Beowulf only the Frankish raid of Hygelac (Klaeber ed., 1928, xxix) are real history; the same is true of the Alamo siege in Crockett.

<sup>6</sup> *Davy Crockett, American Comic Legend*, Richard M. Dorson ed. (New York, 1939), 104-5, 96-7, 93. Compare these exploits with Grettir's holding apart the jaws of a savage bear with his hands; Beowulf's underwater journey to Grendel's cave; Antar's routing of various armies. Antar caused warriors' heads to fly about like balls, Crockett like "horse chestnuts in a hurlycane."

bat, the callous recital of sweat, strain and butchery, the inevitable success of the hero. Although the armored joust familiar in epic and romance seems remote from the backwoods eye-gouging brawl, there are abundant parallels in heroic narrative for Crockett's kind of combat; compare the meetings between Antares and the famed wrestler Rostam, Crockett and the belligerent Puke.

Rostam bent himself like an arch, and appeared like a burning flame. He rushed upon Antares with all his force, for he looked on him as a common man, and he did not know that Antares, even in his youth, used to wrestle with he and she camels in the plains and the rocks. They grasped each other with their hands, they butted with their heads, they assaulted with their whole might, like two lions, or two elephants. Then Rostam stretched out his hand at Antares's waistband, and clung to it, and attempted to lift him up in his arms, but he found him like a stone fixed in a tower, and he tottered before him. Then he repented of what he had done, and of having provoked Antares. He slackened his hold, and he ran round him for an hour, in the presence of Chosroe and his attendants. He then sprang behind him, and thrust his head between his legs, and attempted to raise him on the back of his neck and to dash him on the ground; but Antares knew what were his intentions and his secret designs; so he closed his knees on Rostam's neck, and almost made his eyeballs start from their sockets, and nearly deprived him of life. Rostam was terrified, and wished to escape from between his legs, but he could not; every attempt failed: Antares was like a block of stone growing on a desert or a mountain. Antares seized him and clung to him, and raised him up in his hands like a sparrow in the claws of a bird of prey, and walked away with him among the multitude, wishing to wrestle quietly before the king. But Rostam, when he saw his life was in Antares's hands, like a young child, was abashed and mortified before the warriors and satraps and the great King. He clenched his fist, and struck Antares on the ear. Antares soon recovered from the blow,—he returned to the threshold of the palace, and dashed him on the ground, and smashed him to atoms.

I [Crockett] stood up and spit in his face. He pulled up his breeches, and crowed three times. I felt my flesh crawl over, and my toenails moved out of place. I moved my elbow in scientific order, and got ready to take a twist in his hair. When he seed that, he squealed

and ran around me three times. I jumped up and planted my heels in his bowels. That made him feel dissatisfied with me, and he caught me 'round the thigh and war goin' to throw me down; but I stooped over and cotched him by the seat of his trowsers and held him up in the air, when he squirmed like an eel, and tried to shoot me with his pistol. I twisted him over, and took his knee-pan in my mouth and bit clear through to the bone. He squawked and begged for mercy, and then I let him down, and give him a kick that sent him half a rod, and he run like a deer.<sup>7</sup>

Preparation, encirclement, contact, thrust, reprise, humiliation, foul blow, chastisement—the same routine obtains in these twin bouts, so widely separated in time and place.

The treasures of the warring age are likewise the treasures of Crockett. In one of the almanac legends he lays boastful claim to "the roughest racking horse, the prettiest sister, the surest rifle and the ugliest dog in the district." Mike Fink the Mississippi river-boatman in another place counter-brags, "I've got the handsomest wife, and the fastest horse, and the sharpest shooting iron in all Kentuck."<sup>8</sup> Davy promptly admits he has no horse (an animal not common in the Kentucky canebrakes), waives the female item because Mrs. Crockett is in Tennessee, but challenges Mike on the shooting iron. Killdevil, the rifle Crockett was so quick to champion (also called Brown Betty and Old Thunderbolt),<sup>9</sup> accompanies him on most of his hunting trips, is often referred to with esteem and affection, and introduces a mournful elegy after his death. A visitor enters the cabin, and takes Killdevil down from the wall. "The muzzle was half stopped up with rust, and a great green spider run out of it and made his escape in the cracks of the wall." Crockett defended it to the last, till he was stabbed in the back by a Mexican. "The varmints of the forest will fear it no more;" bears, rattlesnakes and alligators have grown bold and frolicsome "bekase the rifle of Crockett is silent forever."<sup>10</sup> Besides Killdevil, Davy is devoted to Big Butcher, "the longest knife in all Kentuck," and to his dog Teazer.

<sup>7</sup> Clouston, *op. cit.*, 230-231; Dorson, *op. cit.*, 85-86.

<sup>8</sup> Dorson, *op. cit.*, 30, 32. Cf. A. H. Krappe, *The Science of Folklore* (New York, 1930), 23: "... almost every genuine hero of that age ... was said to have possessed the most beautiful woman, the swiftest horse, the best sword, and sometimes, in addition, the finest hound. ..."

<sup>9</sup> Antar's sword Dharni was fashioned from a thunderbolt.

<sup>10</sup> Dorson, *op. cit.*, 25.

The best dog that ever I owned war named Teazer. Besides that I had Tearer, Holdfast, Deathmaul, Grim, Porcupine and Growler, that I've got now. Teazer was the best of the hull lot, and he died one day, bekase when I ordered him to dive in the Mississippi, I forgot to give him the word to come up to the top o' the water, and he wouldn't presume to put his nose above water without orders. He war the only dog I ever owned that war true grit; and the way he could throw a buffalo war astonishment to all my other dogs. He war in his eightieth year when he died.<sup>11</sup>

Characteristic of the heroic mood is the vainglorious self-commendation, the solemn pledge, the dire threat, that customarily precede positive action. Though the flyting of epic is couched in more dignified accents, its essential sameness with the frontier boast has been pointed out.<sup>12</sup> Crockett is the supreme boaster of the frontier; when he and the Puke or roarer hurl backwoods epithets at each other preparatory to mixing it up, they are conforming to heroic ritual in the same way as do Kais and Antar in their exchange of defiance on the Arabian desert.<sup>13</sup>

Remarkable birth, parentage and precocity further unites Crockett with the great heroes. If Antar wrestled with camels in his youth, if Cu Chulainn gained his name by slaying the savage hound of Culainn at the age of six, and if Siegfried slew a dragon while yet a stripling, Davy in turn killed four wolves at six, at seven "drew a lead" on a fox, and at eight weighed 200 pounds fourteen ounces, split rocks in two with his head and sank tree posts in the river-bed by jumping on them.<sup>14</sup> With Crockett, as with other heroes, legends of youth occur as late additions in the body of myth forming around the popular figure—responding no doubt to the legend-stimulating curiosity that invariably attaches to a hero's birth and death.

Nowhere is the significance of the heroic death more forcefully revealed than in the case of Crockett. The scene at the Alamo duplicates a basic situation of heroic drama, the defense of a narrow place

<sup>11</sup> Anon., *The Merry Elephant* (Phila., n. d.), 17. Mr. Franklin J. Meine has kindly permitted me to see his copy of this rare chapbook, which contains reprints of a number of Crockett stories.

<sup>12</sup> Dorothy Dondore, "Big Talk! The Flyting, the Gabe, and the Frontier Boast," *American Speech*, VI (Oct., 1930), 45-55.

<sup>13</sup> Clouston, *op. cit.*, 202-203. Parallelism between Old World and New World boasting is, however, exact only with the Crockett almanac stories, for elsewhere frontier tall talk is not incorporated within an heroic framework.

<sup>14</sup> Dorson, *op. cit.*, 3-8.

against odds; it became the springboard that catapulted the eccentric frontiersman into the popular imagination. According to the standard version of the siege, the Alamo was finally assaulted by the whole force of the Mexican army; after the most desperate resistance, the only six men in the Texas garrison who remained alive surrendered under promise of safety.

Colonel Crockett was of the number. He stood alone in an angle of the fort, the barrel of his shattered rifle in his right hand, in his left his huge bowie-knife dripping blood. There was a frightful gash across his forehead, while around him there was a complete barrier of about twenty Mexicans, lying pell-mell, dead, and dying.

But Santa Anna revokes the promise and orders the prisoners put to the sword.

Colonel Crockett, seeing the act of treachery, instantly sprang like a tiger at the ruffian chief, but before he could reach him a dozen swords were sheathed in his indomitable heart; and he fell and died without a groan, a frown on his brow, and a smile of scorn and defiance on his lips.<sup>15</sup>

The almanac version differs in details. While the Colonel "draws a lead" on one Mexican and puts Big Butcher into another, he is stabbed by a fellow lying on the ground. "Another come up behind and run his bayonet into Crockett's back, for the cretur would as soon have faced a hundred live mammoths as to have faced Crockett at any time. Down fell the Kurnill like a lion struck by thunder and lightning."<sup>16</sup> And the accompanying woodcut shows him lunging forward, arm outstretched, with cold steel bursting through his breast.

Like better known heroic narratives the legendary fictions in the Crockett almanacs represent a literature with oral and popular roots in an Heroic Age, a literature that reflects a particular kind of society and deals with certain constantly returning themes. The Crockett universe portrays the customary masculine, individualistic, relatively barbaric society devoted to hunting, fighting, drinking and sporting; the narrative structure focuses on the career of a central hero, his conquests, courtships, adventures, nomadic travels, birth and death. Some exceptions must be noted to the string of parallels: the lacks

<sup>15</sup> *The Life of David Crockett* (New York, n. d.), 404-406.

<sup>16</sup> Dorson, *op. cit.*, 25.

of aristocratic characters, plundering raids, the central hall or house marked by fellowship and festivity. Nobility is not, however, necessarily found in modern heroic literatures as it is in ancient, or an heroic age may exist in poor communities that could not rightfully be termed aristocratic. Cattle-raids, which would have been appropriate on the frontier of the Texas range, could not appear in the Crockett canebrake country as they do in the Táin, the romance of Antar, and the Mahabharata. A rough equivalent of the central hall can be seen in the "clearing" frequently and protectively referred to by Crockett, where a rigorous backwoods ethics is impressed on encroaching strangers.

Heroic literature not only portrays an heroic age; it must date from that age. The acts of heroism may have occurred, but they cannot survive without the services of the recorders and the storytellers. In the centuries-long process of oral transmission, a spate of scattered stories becomes swollen with the absorption of floating traditions and imaginative improvisations; to the extent that the diffuse material is shaped and directed toward artistic coherence in its literary treatments, the cycle approaches epic form. If it does not reach the final stage of consummated folk epic, as have the Iliad, the Kalevala, Beowulf or the Mahabharata, the effort to do so is plainly perceptible, as in the prose sagas revolving around Cu Chulainn or the expansive poetic romance of Antar; a step lower still, isolated hero-ballads and -tales yet unfused into narrative sequence cluster around Marko Kraljević and Davy Crockett. In the case of Crockett the process has been extraordinarily telescoped, but the parts are all there—the heroic setting, the anonymous myth-making, the literary preservation that presents adventure stories written primarily for entertainment but projected against the background of a familiar set of historical conditions. The almanac yarns have been fated not to reach the grandeur of folk epic, but to remain on the humble level of folktale.

*Cambridge, Massachusetts.*



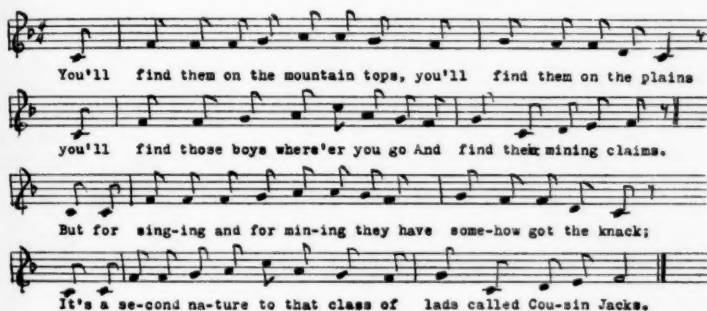
## MINING SONGS

by  
Duncan Emrich

On a recent field trip made possible through a faculty research grant from the University of Denver, I had the good fortune to unearth several ballads and folksongs dealing with the mining camps of the Western states. Three of them follow.

### COUSIN JACK SONG

The Cousin Jack Song, was sung for me by Oakley Johns of Grass Valley, California. Israel James of the same city believes that it was originally written by Charley Tregonning, who at one time worked in Grass Valley. Tombstone is, of course, Tombstone, Arizona, while "Virginia on the Hill" refers to Virginia City, Nevada.



You'll find them on the mountain tops, you'll find them on the plains  
you'll find those boys where'er you go And find their mining claims.  
But for sing-ing and for min-ing they have some-how got the knack;  
It's a se-cond na-ture to that class of lads called Cou-sin Jacks.

You ask me for a song, folks,  
And I'll try to please you all,  
Don't blame me if I do not suit  
For nature has its call.

Cho. But for singing and for mining  
They have somehow got the knack,  
It's a second nature to that class  
Of lads called Cousin Jacks.

You'll find them on the mountain top,  
You'll find them on the plains,  
You'll find those boys where'er you go  
And you'll find their mining claims.

They come from distant Tombstone  
And Virginia on the hill,  
You ne'er can beat a Cousin Jack  
For hammering on the drill.

Amongst you other Irishmen  
Do justice if you can,  
For there's none that can compete  
With the good old Cornishman.

Cho. But for singing and for mining  
They have somehow got the knack,  
It's a second nature to that class  
Of lads called Cousin Jacks.

### CASEY JONES

"Casey Jones" was sung by Bill Gilbert in Grass Valley, California. Gilbert, originally from Lancashire, England, first heard the song in 1918 at Chicago Park (near Colfax, California) when he was president of the Western Federation of Miners. I have also heard the song at the School of Mines in Golden, Colorado.

The fate of Casey—"scorched as flat as a pan"—is one dreaded by all hard rock miners, and when it occurs is the result of a "missed hole," i.e., a dynamite charge which has not exploded in its entirety, one hole remaining unexploded due to a faulty fuse which fizzles slowly only to ignite the dynamite after the miners have returned to the tunnel. The tune is the usual "Casey Jones" tune.

The musical score is written on five staves in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The melody is simple and catchy, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are written below the notes.

Come all you muck-ers and ga - ther here, If you want to hear the  
sto-ry of a mi-ner dear. Ca-sey Jones was the mi-ner's name, on a  
Bur-leigh ma-chine he won his fame. Ca-sey Jones was a ten day  
mi-ner, Ca-sey Jones was a ten day man; Ca-sey Jones took a  
chance too many and now he's min-ing in the pro-mised land.

Come all you muckers and gather here,  
A story I'll tell you of a miner dear,  
Casey Jones was the miner's name,  
On a Burleigh machine he won his fame.

Cho.     Casey Jones was a ten day miner,  
          Casey Jones was a ten day man,  
          Casey Jones took a chance too many,  
          And now he's mining in the promised land.

The story I am about to tell  
Happened at a mine called the Liberty Bell,  
They went into the crosscut and mucked her out  
And Casey said, "We'd better step about."

Casey said, "We'd better dig in  
Before that damned old shift boss comes in;  
If he finds out we've been taking five,  
He'll send us to the office to get our time."

They went into the crosscut, put up the bar,  
Placed the machine up on the arm,  
Put in a starting drill with its bit toward the ground,  
Turned on the air and she began to pound.

Casey said, "If I haven't lied,  
There is a missed hole on that right hand side."  
His partner said, "Oh gracious me,  
If it ever went off where would we be."

They went into the crosscut to drill some more,  
The powder exploded with a hell of a roar.  
It scorched poor Casey just as flat as a pan,  
And now he's mining in the promised land.

Casey said just before he died,  
"There's one more machine I would like to have tried."  
His partner said, "What can it be?"  
"An Ingersoll jackhammer, don't you see."

#### LIBERTY ENGINE CO. NO. 1

This song was given me in Virginia City, Nevada, by William Grainer of Gold Hill. Grainer says that Jack Halstead wrote it about 1873, that it was sung by members of the Company, but was never—as far as he knows—printed. "Not even on the program of the annual banquet." All the references are purely local. "Brother Mike" was Mike Kennedy, chief of the fire department when Halstead and Grainer were members. The "Baltic" was a section of Gold Hill beyond the Belcher Mine on Petaluma Street; the houses on the Baltic were well built and consequently well insured, and when the mines began running out of high grade ore were frequently set on fire by the miners who collected the insurance before drifting on to another camp. Hence the line—"We've been there before." The nickname, "Butts," was given to the Liberty Company by the Jackets (another fire company) because the Liberty boys—in the opinion of

the Jackets—were “Butt Enders,” “snipe shooters,” or smokers of “butts of cigareetes” as Grainer put it. Jack Halstead, Grainer said, died of the miner’s “con” in his early thirties after working for seven years in the Crown Point Mine. The silver trumpet of Liberty Engine Co. No. 1 is in Carson City. The air of the song is “The Sweet Bye and Bye.”

Rap tap goes the bell,  
Oh how we skip and run,  
We jump into the Engine House,  
Look out for Liberty One!

Cho. For the boys are always ready,  
And you bet they’re on the fly,  
And they’ll save the silver trumpet  
For the sweet bye and bye.

We’re seated in the Engine House  
Along with Brother Mike,  
We’re ready for a fire, boys,  
We’re sparring for a fight.

We’re bound for the Baltic,  
We’ve been there before,  
Hurrah for the “Butts,”  
The Jackets are no more!

Cho. For the boys are always ready,  
And you bet they’re on the fly,  
And they’ll save the silver trumpet  
For the sweet bye and bye.

*University of Denver.*

## SOME SOUTH AMERICAN FOLKLORISTS

by

Ralph Steele Boggs

I surveyed South American folklore regions and their study in this *QUARTERLY* (V, 157-167), as observed during my trip there from June to December, 1940. Here I shall list the names and addresses of some persons I met there, with some notes on them and their activities, listing them *abc*, first by country, then by city, then by family name. I hope dissemination of this information may help our New World folklorists to establish new contacts with their colleagues of like interests, stimulating thus not only scholarship in our field but also broader values of intellectual cooperation, friendship and unity in our great nascent American culture.

I know of three professorships of folklore in South America, all established in the late 1930's and related to schools of music: those held by Jijena Sánchez in Buenos Aires, Corrêa de Azevedo and Itiberê in Rio de Janeiro.

The following list is not complete nor comprehensive nor entirely selective: it is based on and altogether limited to men I saw. In some cases, I was unable to see men who are undoubtedly important in the field, like Mario de Andrade, Arthur Ramos and Luiz da Camara Cascudo in Brasil. Space permits mention of only a small portion of all those I met. Of course I must have missed some.

### ARGENTINA — BUENOS AIRES

Carrizo, Juan Alfonso. Chimborazo 2131. He came from Northern Argentina, where he has lived and traveled and has found opportunity to study intensively the folklore of various sections of northern Argentina: Jujuy, Catamarca, Salta, Tucumán and La Rioja. He has a special interest in Argentine ballads and folksongs, texts rather than music, of which he has published great collections. From 1917 to 1927 he taught school in Buenos Aires. Since then he has been subsidized by the National council of education to gather and study Argentine folklore. Though best known as a field worker and collector, he has one of the best selected private libraries in South America for the study of Spanish American balladry and folksong, with its Spanish background. He has a large card file of his texts and some of the major Spanish collections, classified *abc* by keywords (usually the nouns) in the verses, with abundant cross-references,

to which he is continually adding; thus he is able to find parallels with great facility. He is honorary director and technical adviser of the folklore department of the Institute of university cooperation of the Courses in Catholic culture in Buenos Aires, and a member of Folklore Americas and the Argentine academy of letters.

Cortázar, Augusto Raúl. Perú 77. Born in Salta, he has traveled widely in Argentina, was educated in the National college, Buenos Aires, obtained his teacher's certificate in 1933, and his certificate in library science in 1940 from the Faculty of philosophy and letters, University of Buenos Aires, and his law degree in 1938 from the Faculty of law and social sciences of the same University. He teaches Spanish, Hispanic-American and Argentine literature in the Commercial high school and is assistant librarian at the National college. He is interested especially in festivals of northern Argentina (Salta and Jujuy). He has published a little of a general nature on Argentine folklore. He gives a course in folklore bibliography at the Institute of Argentine literature, University of Buenos Aires; he expects to check the work of his folklore students who are searching extensively for folklore titles in the Buenos Aires libraries and will eventually compile a bibliography of Argentine folklore available in the libraries of Buenos Aires. He is a member of Folklore Americas, and will doubtless become the bibliographer of Argentine folklore.

Faré, Santo S. Matheu 976. Born in Paraná, Entre Ríos, he studied in the Universities of La Plata and Buenos Aires, and has a doctorate both in juridical and social sciences and in diplomacy. Since 1919 he has been professor of law in the University of Buenos Aires, and is a judge and member of the Chamber of appeals (commercial). He is interested in the philosophy and psychology underlying folklore, in which he is capable of penetrating analysis, and in folklore as a medium for developing national consciousness in Argentina and for the furtherance of international understanding. His folklore publications are chiefly in the bulletin and special publications of the Argentine folklore association, of which he is president. He is also a member of Folklore Americas.

Palavecino, Enrique. Sección de etnografía, Museo Rivadavia, Chubut 450. He is in charge of Section of ethnography, Argentine museum of natural sciences Bernardino Rivadavia, professor in the University of La Plata and "libre docente" in the Faculty of philosophy and letters, University of Buenos Aires, where he teaches anthropology and ethnography. In 1938, only, he held a professorship of ethnography and folklore in the University of Tucumán. He

and his wife frequently travel to various parts of Argentina to study the life of more primitive groups and gather materials for the Museum, where he has some fifty objects of folklore interest, including pottery, weaving, furniture, harness, etc. He intends to include objects of more civilized groups. His interest is especially in folklore's material aspects. He has published some articles of folklore interest. With his wife, María Delia Millán de Palavecino, he is preparing a study on "La vivienda argentina," and is collecting data on folk medicine in Argentina. His wife is preparing a "Cocinera popular."

Vega, Carlos. Cangallo 1186. He was born in the province of Buenos Aires, of Andalusian parents. After two years in Entre Ríos, he settled in the city of Buenos Aires, where he has remained. He has traveled rather widely over Argentina, also in Chile, Bolivia, Peru and southern Brasil. He studied in the Faculty of philosophy and letters, University of Buenos Aires, in whose Institute of Argentine literature he has been "técnico" of the Folklore section since 1933. He has long studied music, and since 1926 has been in charge of the "Gabinete" of musicology in the Argentine museum of natural sciences Bernardino Rivadavia. His historical perspective on his field has extended his interest back to medieval European, especially Spanish, minstrel music, and he has photostatic copies of a number of manuscripts containing music of the 13th to 15th centuries. His card file of notes and texts collected includes some 1,200 melodies and data on the dance and musical instruments. He has small disk recordings of some 300 Argentine folksongs. His field trips have been chiefly in northern Argentina. He has one of the best private libraries on Argentine folkmusic, including a number of works from other South American countries and some from Europe. The general background material in his library seems better than in most such libraries. He has published about a hundred articles on folkmusic, many in Buenos Aires newspapers and journals (of which he has a clipping file), of a rather solid nature. He has published a list of his publications from 1926 to 1941, in pamphlet form. He published in 1941 a monumental two volume work on Argentine folkmusic, and has about ready for publication a manuscript on the origin of criollo dances. He is a member of Folklore Americas and of the Argentine folklore association.



## ARGENTINA — MENDOZA

Draghi Lucero, Juan. Paso de los Andes 152. He was born of an Italian father and Argentine mother in Mendoza, where he has always lived. He has traveled over Cuyo, and visited France in 1927. Since 1935 he has been professor of Spanish and the history of civilization in the commercial high school Martín Zapata. In 1940 he was named assistant secretary of the Institute of historical investigations, National university of Cuyo. He published an enormous collection of folk verse of Cuyo 1938, and One thousand and one Argentine nights 1940, prose narratives of a folk nature. He is a member of Folklore Americas and various cultural organizations in Argentina.

## ARGENTINA — SANTIAGO DEL ESTERO

Canal Feijóo, Bernardo. 9 de julio 339. He was born in Santiago del Estero, of a Spanish father and Argentine mother. He has always lived there, except 1910-1922, when he resided in Buenos Aires. He has traveled in Argentina, Uruguay, Brasil, Chile, Peru and to the north as far as the United States. He studied in the National college, Buenos Aires, and Faculty of law and social sciences, University of Buenos Aires, where he received his doctorate. He is interested in developing and has various publications on the folklore of his region, notably an essay on artistic expression of the folk, 1937, an analysis of some legends collected there, 1938, and an analysis of fox tales in Argentina, which show keen comprehension of the folk character. He is a member of Folklore Americas and various Argentine cultural organizations.

Lullo, Orestes di. Libertad 781. He was born in Santiago del Estero, of Italian parents. He studied in Buenos Aires, 1917-1924, in the National college and Faculty of medicine, University of Buenos Aires, obtaining his M.D. in 1924. He has traveled over Argentina. In 1936 he received a grant from the National commission of culture to study the folklore of the province of Santiago del Estero, in which field he has been working for twelve years, and hopes to publish a monumental work, including folk poetry and music, custom, festival, belief, narrative, dance, medicine, food and vocabulary. He has already two noteworthy works on the folklore of his province: on folk medicine 1929, and folk food 1935, besides various articles. He is a member of Folklore Americas, and is to be director of Santiago del Estero's new Provincial museum of folklore, history, numismatics, religious art and bibliography.

## ARGENTINA — TUCUMAN

Jijena Sánchez, Rafael. Casilla de correo 59. Born in Tucumán, he has traveled through Argentina and Bolivia, and as far as Puno, Peru. He was educated in the National college and University of Buenos Aires. He occupied until 1941 the only professorship of folklore in Argentina (established in 1939) in the National conservatory of music and dramatic art in Buenos Aires. He has prepared a mimeographed syllabus and plan of instruction embracing three years' work. He was also director of a folklore department in the Institute of university cooperation, Courses in Catholic culture in Buenos Aires, which offered instruction in folklore, and he was editor of *Folklore*, organ of this department. From his elementary folklore groups in both of these institutions, he selected a small group of students for a weekly seminar. He has published, especially in his organ, *Folklore*, and in collaboration with Bruno Jacovella made a serious attempt to improve method in their volume on superstitions. He has a fair library in Argentine folklore. He is a member of Folklore Americas. As this manuscript is being prepared, word comes that he has left Buenos Aires to become chief of the Folklore section in the Institute of history, linguistics and folklore of the University of Tucumán. Thus it is uncertain what will happen to the professorship of folklore in Buenos Aires.

## BOLIVIA — LA PAZ

Posnansky, Arthur. Apartado 139. He was born in Vienna, and has traveled quite widely over Europe and America. His training, intellectual interests and activities cover a wide range. He is an engineer, and has held professorships in various universities. He has published a list of his publications from 1895 to 1940, whose 101 titles indicate his varied interests. Archeology, anthropology and ethnology of the Indians around lake Titicaca, especially Tiahuanaco, constitute a favorite field for him. His large house in La Paz is filled with various museum pieces of archeological and folklore interest. He has one of the finest private libraries in Bolivia, including a majority of the small number of works published on Bolivian folklore. He is a leader in many phases of cultural activities in La Paz, a member of Folklore Americas, and has recently organized a Bolivian folklore society.

## BRASIL — RIO DE JANEIRO

Albuquerque Lima, Sylvio Julio. Av. Eduardo Guinle 6—Apto. 44. He is professor of American history in the University of Brasil, well

read in Americanistic literature. His interest in Brazilian folklore is best seen in his volume of *Fundamentals of Brazilian poetry*. He has an excellent command of Spanish, and has traveled in Colombia and Venezuela. He is a great admirer of Spanish culture and is particularly impressed by its infiltration into southern Brasil, in Rio Grande do Sul, where he resided for some time. He recently organized a folklore section in the Federation of Academies of letters of Brasil, whose journal he directs, and is vigorously supporting a movement to establish a Brazilian folklore society.

Corrêa de Azevedo, Luiz Heitor. Rua dos Parecís 5 (Cosme Velho). He was born in Rio, of Brazilian parents, and has lived there and in various parts of the state of Rio de Janeiro all his life. He has traveled in Minas Gerais, São Paulo, Paraná, Santa Catarina, and in the United States. He received his advanced instruction in the National institute of music, 1924-1928, where he was librarian from 1932 to 1939. Since 1937 he has been professor of the history of music in the Brazilian conservatory of music, and since 1939 he has also been professor of national folklore in the National school of music, University of Brasil. In this professorship of folklore, founded theoretically in 1931, but not practically made effective until 1939, he gives every year, two hours a week through the school year, a course on Brazilian folklore, which must be taken by all students of musical composition in the school. He has a mimeographed program of topics covered in the course, with accompanying bibliography. He published in 1938 his study of scale, rhythm and melody in the music of Brasil's Indians (as a candidate in the contest for the professorship of folklore), some reflections on folkmusic in Brasil, and paths of South American music, considered country by country. With the cooperation of his students, he is organizing an archive of folk-music and studying Brazilian Indian musical instruments. He is a member of Folklore Americas, and maintains active contact with various cultural organizations, both in Brasil and elsewhere, that have some interest in folklore.

Itiberê, Brasílio C. Luz. Praia Flamengo 64. He holds a professorship of ethnography and musical folklore in the Departamento do canto orfônico da Prefeitura do Distrito federal in Rio de Janeiro. In 1936 the Prefeitura formed a University of the Federal district, with a department of musicology which included a professorship of ethnography and folklore. In 1938 this University was incorporated into the University of Brasil, but its Department of musicology remained to function as a separate entity, called Service of musical

education, to train music teachers for the Federal district. His course, given every year, is dedicated entirely to folkmusic of Brasil.

Magalhães, Basilio de. Rua Paulino Fernandes 27 (Botafogo). He is professor of history in the Institute of education in Rio. His bibliographic survey of Brazilian folklore is one of the best contributions to the field in Brasil. He has a fine large private library, covering many fields, especially history, but its section on Brazilian folklore is also good and includes a number of works from other Latin American countries and Portugal, Spain and the United States.

Ribeiro, Joaquim. Instituto nacional do livro, Edificio da Biblioteca nacional. He is the son of João Ribeiro, one of Brasil's greatest folklorists of the past generation, and he has inherited both his father's interest in Brazilian folklore and his father's folklore library, which was one of the most important private libraries in the field. It contains folklore works from Brasil and Europe; indeed, in its basis for comparative study in European items, it is one of the best equipped private libraries in Brasil. Joaquim Ribeiro was born of Brazilian parents, in Rio, where he has always lived, except 1912-1914, when he resided in Geneva, Switzerland, and 1932, when he lived in Santo Antonio da Platina, Paraná, Brasil. He has traveled widely in Brasil and Europe. He studied in the Faculty of law, now part of the University of Brasil. From 1926 to 1931 he worked in the National archive, in 1932 in Paraná, and since 1933 in various capacities in the National department of education, and now in the National institute of the book. From 1934 to 1937 he was professor of Portuguese, and in 1935 of sociology of art, in the School of drama. He conducted various folklore investigations in Pernambuco in 1933, in Amazonia in 1934-1935, and on various occasions around Rio. Most important among his folklore publications are: Tradition and legends, and Introduction to the study of Brazilian folklore. He participates in various group folklore activities in Rio, and is a member of Folklore Americas.

#### BRASIL — SAO PAULO

Miranda, Nicanor. Departamento de cultura, Florencio de Abreu 65. He was born in São Paulo, of Brazilian parents, and has always lived there, except for trips in 1928 to Uruguay and Argentina, and in 1937 to Italy, France, Germany and Austria, when he represented São Paulo in the International folklore congress, held in Paris. Between 1924 and 1936 he studied in the Faculty of philosophy of São Bento and Faculties of law and of philosophy, science and letters,

University of São Paulo, where he obtained his doctorate. He has unusual linguistic talent, having a good command of Portuguese, Spanish, French, English and German. He has been actively associated with leading cultural organizations of São Paulo, including the University of São Paulo, the Free school of sociology and political science, the Department of culture of the municipality and its Municipal phonograph record library. He is director of the Division of education and recreation in the Department of culture. He is preparing manuscripts on traditional games of children in São Paulo, on beliefs among working boys in São Paulo between the ages of thirteen and twenty with comparative notes, on methodology of folklore and children, and on the themes of love and death in Luso-Brasilian proverb lore. He has published chiefly in the Review of the municipal archive, which is also the organ of the Society of ethnography and folklore of São Paulo, of which he has been president since 1938. He is a member of Folklore Americas and of the International committee on folklore atlases, on which he has already done some work in Brasil. He is also interested in "A nau Catherineta" and "cavalhadas."

#### CHILE — SANTIAGO

Pereira Salas, Eugenio. Casilla de correos 1483. He was born in Santiago de Chile, of Chilean parents, and has usually lived there. In 1926 he traveled in Argentina, in 1927 in Italy and northern Africa, in 1928 in England, in 1930 in Spain, in 1937 in Switzerland, Austria, Belgium and Holland, and in 1941 in the United States of America. He studied in the National institute in Santiago de Chile, 1917-1922, and in the Pedagogic institute there, 1923-1926, in the Sorbonne in Paris, France, 1926-1928, in the archives and libraries of Sevilla, Paris and Berlin, and in Washington, D. C., and Berkeley, California, 1933-1934. He is professor of history and geography in the University of Chile in Santiago. He published material on Chilean folk dances and songs in 1938 and *Origins of the art of music in Chile*, 1941, in which about half the book is occupied with an able treatise, well illustrated with examples, on the historical development of folk dance and music in Chile. He is a member of the Folklore society of Mexico, Folklore Americas, the Chilean institute of folk art and of the folklore section of the Chilean society of history and geography.

Pino Saavedra, Yolando. Instituto pedagógico. He was born in Parral, Linares, Chile, of Chilean parents of Spanish origin. He spent his early childhood in Parral, and during 1915-1919 he lived in

Valdivia. He has since lived in Santiago de Chile, except for his student days in Hamburg, Germany, 1925-1931. He studied in the Pedagogic institute of the University of Chile, preparing himself as a teacher of Spanish and German. He studied general literature and modern German literature in the University of Hamburg, in whose Ibero-American institute he also studied Romance philology and received some training in folklore with Fritz Krüger. He taught Spanish during his stay at the University of Hamburg, and received his doctorate in 1931. While in Europe, he visited Austria, Sweden, Paris, Amsterdam and Utrecht, and in 1939 he traveled to Puntas Arenas, in southernmost Chile. He is professor of German and literary esthetics in the Faculty of philosophy and education, University of Chile, and dean of that Faculty. In the summer school of the University of Chile, in January 1941, he introduced a new course, an introduction to the study of Chilean folklore. Through published reviews, Pino Saavedra has made known great folklore works of Laval in Germany, he is now studying the proverbs in Daniel Barros Grez, and he intends to publish a bibliography of Chilean folklore. He is in contact with folklore movements generally in Santiago de Chile, and is a member of Folklore Americas.

#### ECUADOR — QUITO

Cornejo, Justino. Carchi 114. He was born in Puebloviejo, Los Ríos, Ecuador, of mestizo Ecuadorean parents. He spent most of his childhood there. He resided in Quito, 1919-1924, in Manabí, 1924-1930, and again in Quito since 1930; hence he knows his country well, both the coastal and the mountain regions. In 1924 he traveled as far south as Lima, Peru; in 1927 he traveled as far north as Panama; and in 1931 he went to Ipiales and Pasto, Colombia. He studied in the Normal institute Juan Montalvo in Quito, 1919-1924. He studied law in the University in Quito, 1931-1935. From schoolteacher and principal in Portoviejo, he has risen to professor of Spanish and pedagogy in the Institute of pedagogy and letters in Quito, and has directed the Department of cultural extension and the Technical department in the Ministry of education in Quito. His most important folklore publication is *Fuera del diccionario*, 1938; he is now preparing a comparative dictionary of Ecuadorianisms; and his private library is strongest in this field. He is secretary of the Ecuadorean atheneum, member of Folklore Americas, and actively identified with various cultural organizations in Quito.



## PARAGUAY — ASUNCION

Bertoni, Guillermo Tell. Azara 538. He was born in the Paraguayan village of Jesús y Trinidad, spent most of his youth at Puerto Bertoni and his mature life at Asunción, except for two years at Posadas, Argentina. His parents were Swiss. He has traveled as far as Buenos Aires and Montevideo. He studied for awhile (1902-1904) at the National school of agriculture, but he is essentially a self-taught man. He has long served his government well in many capacities related to agriculture and meteorology, being minister of agriculture, 1936-1937. Since 1928 he has taught in Asunción in various positions, and since 1937 he has been professor of economic geography in the University of Asunción. He has published works on the human and economic geography of his country and the language and various aspects of folklore of the Guayaki and the Guaraní Indians in general. He is preparing a work on yerba mate, a grammar and dictionary of Guaraní, the dictionary to pay particular attention to folklore terms, and a general cultural work on the Ibero-Guaraní nations, which will contain much of folklore interest. He has a good basic knowledge of Guaraní culture. He is interested in developing folklore studies in Paraguay, he is secretary of the Scientific society of Paraguay, has taken a leading part in organizing its Historic and ethnographic museum, and is a member of Folklore Americas.

## PERU — CUZCO

Navarro del Aguila, Víctor. Montero 12. He was born in Ayacucho, of Peruvian parents of Spanish-Indian origin. He spent his childhood there and in Andahuailas, which regions he has traveled through, collecting folklore. Since 1932 he has resided in Cuzco. He has traveled as far as Arequipa, Mollendo and Lima, but chiefly his travels have been in the Andean region of southern Peru, which is his region of special interest for folklore study. He studied in the Faculty of philosophy, history and letters and in the Faculty of law, University of Cuzco, and received his doctorate in the former Faculty in 1939, specializing in archeology. Since 1936 he has been professor of Spanish in the National college of sciences in Cuzco, and in 1940 he was made professor in the University of Cuzco, where he teaches prehispanic and colonial history of Peru and American and Peruvian archeology and conducts a seminar in Peruvian history. Aside from more than 30 articles, many of which are of folklore interest, usually from the historical or archeological point of view, he published in



1939 an important volume, including considerable folklore, on the tribes of Ankcu Walloke (Pokcras, Chankas and Wankas), which inhabited the region of Ayacucho, Huancavelica and Apurímac. He has in preparation a study of the Carnival songs of Andahuailas. He is the librarian of the American institute of art, a member of the Geographic society of Cuzco, of the Ccoscco center of native art, and of Folklore Americas.

#### PERU — LIMA

Benvenuto Murrieta, Pedro M. Pasaje Velarde 185. He has lived all his life in Lima. For his doctorate in history and letters at the Catholic university in Lima he prepared a thesis on the Spanish of Peru in 1936. He is now compiling a dictionary of Peruvianisms.

Farfán Ayerbe, José Mario Benigno. General Córdoba 1572. He was born of Peruvian parents, his father being of Castilian descent, his mother of Bask and indigenous stock, in the district of Accha, in the province of Paruro, department of Cuzco, Peru. He lived there until he was thirteen, then in the city of Cuzco, 1915-1924; in Sicuani, 1925-1926; again in Accha, 1927; in Chicago, U.S.A., 1928-1930; in Cincinnati, 1931; in Hanover, Indiana, 1932-1933; again in Chicago, 1934-1935; in Quito, Ecuador, 1936-1937; in Potosí, Bolivia, 1938; and in Lima since 1938. He has traveled intensively through his native Andean region of southern Peru, also in Panama, Cuba, all across the United States of America, from New York through St. Louis, Kansas City, Denver, Cheyenne, Butte, Boise, Spokane, etc., and through various sections of Ecuador and Bolivia. He studied in various schools in Peru and the United States of America (Chicago, Hanover college, Kansas state university), chiefly in social science and Classical and Oriental languages, taking his B.A. in social science and English at Hanover college. He has been a schoolteacher in Canchis, Peru, a social worker in Gary, Indiana, U.S.A., a lecturer on philology in the University of San Andrés and the Tiahuanaco museum in La Paz, Bolivia, and, since 1938, he has held the professorship of Quechua in the University of San Marcos, in Lima. His chief interest is in the Quechua language and various aspects of the folklore of the Quechua-speaking Andean region of Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia. His folklore interest dates back to 1920, when he collected several hundred proverbs. He has also collected the words of some 500 Quechua songs, and many legends, tales, riddles, etc., and has done considerable work in Quechua linguistics. He has a list of some 2,000 Spanish words current in Quechua and some 1,000 Quechua words current in Spanish, and he is working

on a Quechua dictionary. Little of his abundant manuscript material has yet been published. He is a member of Folklore Americas.

Jiménez Borja, Arturo. Malecón Bertolotto 270 (San Miguel). He is professor of anthropology, Catholic university, Lima. He has an excellent collection of Peruvian dance masks. On dances and masks he has published numerous articles. In *Moche*, 1938, he studied the folklore of the pre-Inca Mocha Indians of northern coastal Peru, based on illustrations on vases, and some phases of folklore of the modern inhabitants of that region. He has also published on Peruvian legends, folktales, arts and crafts.

Romero, Fernando. Alcanfores 873 (Miraflores). He is a Peruvian navy captain and is director of the literary society, Insula. He has a keen interest in local culture, especially Negro, of the Peruvian coastal region, particularly songs and dances, of which he has a large manuscript collection. He visited the United States in 1941.

Schwab, Federico. Biblioteca central de la Universidad mayor de San Marcos. Born in Germany, he came to Peru in 1929. He has traveled through Egypt, Palestine, Uruguay, Argentina, and various parts of Peru, remaining in Bolivia, 1927-1928, and in the primitive forests of Chanchamayo, Peru, 1929-1930. He had seven years of secondary Humanistic Gymnasium instruction in Germany. He has worked in the central library of the University of San Marcos in Lima since 1934, doing various types of library work. He is editing secretary of the Bibliographic bulletin of this library, in which he has published some excellent bibliographies of Peruvian anthropology and folklore. He has translated from German into Spanish a number of fundamental ethnological works. Not only is he the most prominent bibliographer of Peruvian folklore, but he has also shown himself to be a profound thinker along the lines of basic trends in the general development of the science of folklore, as is seen in three recent articles of his in *Sphinx*: The historical and sociological concept of folklore; Romantic roots of folklore; and Folklore, new field of study in America and the necessity of its historic orientation. He is a member of Folklore Americas.

Vivanco, Moisés. Plaza Dos de Mayo 68. He is a young musician who plays native music with a group on the Radio nacional. He has collected words and music of some 1,200 folksongs of various types, both pure Indian and mestizo, gathered in Apurímac, Ayacucho, Huancavelica and Junín. Many of his songs are in Quechua, with Spanish translation. He appears to know his field and folk well, and he could doubtless be trained as a fine fieldworker.

## URUGUAY — MONTEVIDEO

Berro García, Adolfo. Uruguay 917-3. He is director, section of philology and experimental phonetics, Institute of higher studies, editor of its organ, Bulletin of philology, which contains articles on Uruguayan folkspeech. He has studied in Europe, notably with the eminent Spanish phonetician, Navarro Tomás, in Madrid. He is preparing a dictionary of Uruguayanisms, and has already published some articles along this line.

Pereda Valdés, Ildefonso. Agraciada 3929-1. He was born in Tacuarembó, Uruguay, of a Spanish father and a Uruguayan mother, and spent his childhood there. He went to Montevideo in 1912, where he has resided since, excepting the years 1926-1930, which he spent in Buenos Aires. He has traveled over Uruguay, across Argentina, in Chile and up the coast of Brasil as far as Rio de Janeiro. He studied law in the Faculty of law and social sciences of the University of Montevideo, 1917-1924, and has practiced law ever since. He has taught Spanish and general literature in various schools in Montevideo, and has collected various types of folklore in Uruguay. His *Negro of the Río de la Plata* and other essays, 1937, contains various items of folklore and is his most important publication for folklore so far. His *Anthology of American Negro poetry*, 1936, contains some folksongs. Various other publications of his treat different phases of South American and general New World Negro folklore. He has ready for publication a book on Negro slaves and free Negroes in the Río de la Plata. He is also preparing a book of stories of the tiger and the sun, which will include tales, riddles, proverbs, games, rimes, beliefs, folk medicine and a variety of types of Uruguayan folklore from the department of Cerro Largo. He is a member of Folklore Americas, and identified with a number of other cultural organizations.

*University of North Carolina.*

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## "BALDY GREEN"

by

Louise Pound

This spirited ballad of Western "bad men" and an attempted stage coach robbery was sent me by Mr. Edward Burnett of Buffalo, Wyoming. It was composed, he thinks, about 1866-69. He heard it in 1880, "near where Sheridan, Wyoming, is now," and he at once wrote it down from memory. A teacher of music later transcribed the tune as he sung it. Mr. Burnett would like to learn something of the identity of the song, its authorship or history, and the event it narrates, if any one can supply information on these points. He has never been able to find other texts of it, he says, whether in oral currency or in anthologies of Western songs.

Come listen to my ditty  
'Twill not detain you long  
'Tis about one Baldy Green  
And I'll tell you in my song.  
For he could swing a whip so lightly  
That he was sure to shine  
He was a way-up six horse driver  
On Ben Holiday's stage line.

As Baldy came driving into town  
As lively as a coon,  
Six men jumped into the middle of the road,  
By the pale light of the moon.  
The one he caught his leaders  
Another his gun he cocks  
Says he, "Baldy we're sorry to trouble you  
But hand us out that box."

O those leaders they knew Baldy,  
And Baldy he knew them.  
He whistled to them lightly  
And they were off again.  
The swing team and the wheelers  
Were also full of pride.  
They kicked the robbers from them,—  
'Twas Baldy Green's last ride.

As the stage coach started down the road,  
Those robbers they were mean.

They unlimbered their six shooters  
Shot gallant Baldy Green.  
When they took Baldy from the seat  
With his last breath he told,  
"The road agents they've got Baldy,  
But Baldy saved the gold."

## BOOK REVIEW

*Our Singing Country: A Second Volume of American Ballads and Folk Songs.* Collected and compiled by John A. Lomax and Alan Lomax; Ruth Crawford Seeger, Music Editor. 1941: The Macmillan Company, New York. xxxiv + 416 pp.

"The function of this book is to let American folk singers have their say with the readers." The readers envisaged are the general public as much as the professional folklorists. The result is indeed a functional book; 203 American folk songs in some twenty categories, attractively presented in texts and melodies, with a running commentary, which is also largely folk-say, by Aunt Molly Jackson and other such.

In several ways the book is a marked improvement over the first Lomax collaboration, *American Ballads and Folk Songs* (1934). The level of quality of the songs is higher, chiefly because the Lomaxes, with Alan come of age, have collected widely and deeply since the first volume, and the contents could be chosen from the rich stores of Lomax field recordings now in the Archive of American Folk Song, Library of Congress.

The fact that the contents are derived from field recordings explains another superiority of this second volume: the melodies of the songs. They have been meticulously transcribed by Ruth Crawford Seeger from duplicate discs, and appear as nearly in the flesh as can be managed in common musical notation. There are very few places in which this reviewer, who has had the privilege of hearing many of the discs from which the transcriptions were made, would quibble over a quaver with Mrs. Seeger. Indeed, while the accuracy and quality of musical notation in many American folksong publications are either illiterate or unintelligent, the present volume of transcriptions is in a class with the work of the impeccable Cecil Sharp and the erudite precision of Mr. George Herzog. Mrs. Seeger has devised clear and simple ways of meeting such notational problems as the held tone, and has had her wish "to include as many characteristics of singing-style as is possible, yet to keep most of the notations simple enough to be sight-read by the average amateur." Her music preface contains insight into the matter of American singing-styles, a subject until recently ignored in folksong publications.

The editors have done much to bridge the often embarrassing gap between a folklore collection and the folks. American singers do here "have their say with the readers." One feels in the book a deep and warm understanding of the songs and of the people who sang them. Folksong herein ceases to be esoteric and becomes an essential, artistic expression of American people. The pattern and function of the book are derived from a passionate belief in the people who sing these songs. The quality of this belief more than compensates for what some folklorists may consider a radical and "unscholarly" practice in the book: the making of composite versions of the texts,



which composites are duly acknowledged in the headnotes though not made fully specific by stanzas.

The editors' belief is not romantic but is based on an extraordinarily rich experience of hundreds of folk singers the country over. Mr. Alan Lomax's experience leads him to take issue with Cecil Sharp's statement (inaccurately quoted in the book) that the American folk singer aims "to forget himself and everything that reminds him of his everyday life; and so it is that he has come to create an imaginary world of his own and to people it with characters quite as wonderful, in their way, as the elfish creations of Spenser." Mr. Lomax finds that the songs of a folk singer "have been strongly rooted in his life and have functioned there as enzymes to assist in the digestion of hardship, solitude, violence, hunger, and the honest comradeship of democracy." Since Sharp was partial to the child ballad and its medieval qualification his statement needs qualification, and Mr. Lomax supplies the qualification. The opposition of their points of view is, however, less complete than it at first seems or Mr. Lomax suggests. Through the extension of the imagination even the most "elfish" of the Child ballads grows roots in the life of an American folk singer as he identifies himself with a medieval lord or lady and as he localizes the situation and *mise en scene*. Sharp's statement was based on far less wide experience of American folk song, on almost no experience of the occupational songs of the white people and the blues of the negroes. *Our Singing Country* contains seven Child ballads and only sixteen others of which Sharp's Appalachian collection has versions. Mr. Lomax's perspective is naturally different, his orientation more extensive. Sharp's remarks are valid for the material he knew about; Lomax's offer a larger, more American interpretation.

One suspects that this volume may be the last song publications by the Lomaxes. Mr. Alan Lomax himself strongly suggests this in his prefatory remarks about the inferiority of the field notebook to the field recording, which latter "shows the folk song in its three-dimensional entirety, that is, with whatever rhythmic accompaniment there may be . . . , with its instrumental background, and with its folk harmonization." The process which resulted in this printed book of folksongs is in effect the reduction of the original field recordings to the dimensions of a very careful field notebook. The experience of folk singers in learning songs, and of those of us who have used both books and recordings in adding to the repertoires of students in the classroom, shows that a song is best learned directly from singer to ear of listener, less well through a visual medium. Only a very highly experienced folklorist is able to hear or reproduce the three-dimensional entirety of a song from looking at its transcription even in *Our Singing Country*. It follows that one purpose of this volume, to be functional with singers, can hardly be achieved as well through print as through duplicate recordings in album format. The chief function of printed collections of folksongs remains what it has usually been in the past—to provide materials for study and analysis

by students of folklore. In the present volume a further function, made possible by inclusion in the headnotes of the call number of the original discs in the Archive of American Folk Song, is that of a descriptive catalogue for persons who may wish to order duplicate recordings from the Archive.

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